

*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*  
*Executive Office of Public Safety*  
*Massachusetts Fire Training Council*

**Rules and Regulations**  
**For the**  
**Basic Firefighter Training Program**  
**Massachusetts Firefighting Academy**

UNIFORM OF THE DAY

- A. Uniform shall be a clean departmental work uniform, Class B pants, shirt, black belt and black shoes, unless otherwise specified by the Recruit Program Coordinator or the Officer of the Day.
- B. For physical training only, sneakers or gym shoes, navy blue t-shirt or sweatshirt, and navy blue sweatpants or navy blue shorts shall be worn. All t-shirts and sweatshirts worn at the Academy shall be plain navy blue either with no lettering or with the department-approved emblem only. All t-shirts and sweatshirts are subject to approval by the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy.
- C. Students should report each day in a clean departmental Class B work uniform. Sneakers shall not be worn in the classroom or at any other time except physical training.
- D. A clean departmental uniform, Class B, shall be worn for graduation.
- E. Dungarees may not be worn in place of uniform pants.
- F. All students shall change from physical training clothing to clean departmental Class B uniform prior to start of classroom or practical evolutions for the day unless otherwise specified by the recruit program coordinator or the officer of the day.
- G. Only department issue or department approved hats or caps will be worn on Academy grounds or other training sites. Hats or caps are not to be worn in the classroom, during physical training, or during any practical evolutions.
- H. No glasses other than prescription glasses or clean safety glasses will be worn at the Academy or other training sites.
- I. All students shall be clean-shaven at morning roll call. Mustaches may be allowed if allowed by the student's departments; however, in no case shall beards or any facial hair, which may impair the safety of the student or the proper operations of self-contained breathing apparatus, be worn.
- J. Hair shall be cut neatly and students shall be well groomed. Students with long hair will have the hair secured in back neatly, away from the facial area, during the training day.
- K. Any jewelry, i.e. chains, hoop earrings, etc., which present a safety hazard shall not be allowed.
- L. Audio/video recorders and still photography equipment shall not be allowed except by permission of the Director or his designee.

## DEPARTMENT

- A. No abusive language may be used and no obscene or offensive literature shall be brought onto any Academy training site.
- B. All gambling is prohibited at any Academy training site.
- C. Alcoholic beverages and/or narcotics are prohibited and may not be consumed at any Academy training site or during any break period or lunch hour. Students who appear at any training session while under the influence of alcoholic beverages or any illegal substance will not be allowed to participate in training for the day and their department notified as to the alleged condition of the student. Students will not be allowed to leave the Academy training site until a departmental decision is made for their safe transportation back to the student's respective community.
- D. No smoking, chewing of tobacco or snuff shall be allowed during classes or in the classroom.
- E. No visitors other than chiefs of department and/or training officers shall be allowed at any Academy training site. All visitors shall check in with the Recruit Program Coordinator or OD.
- F. All telephone calls shall have prior approval by academy staff. Cellular telephones shall be prohibited.
- G. "Mr.", "Sir", or "Ma'am" shall be used when addressing visiting lecturers and instructors.
- H. All students and visiting officers will be respectful and courteous to each other, the staff and all other visitors.
- I. Gum chewing, eating and drinking (except for the MFA issued water bottle) in the classroom areas are not allowed. Water bottles are not allowed in the auditorium at any time.
- J. Students will not, for any reason, enter or remain proximate to private vehicles during the training day, without the express permission of the Coordinator or OD.
- K. Pagers, cell phones, and other electronic devices will be prohibited from Academy grounds.

## ATTENDANCE

- A. Students shall not leave the training sites while assigned to the Academy.
- B. Students shall report any sickness or absence to the Chief of Department or senior working officer in the Chief's absence and to the Academy at least one half hour prior to roll call at 978-567-3218 or 978-567-3219. Failure to report any absence shall be considered grounds for dismissal from the class.
- C. Unexcused absences will not be tolerated. Any absence shall be evaluated as to the impact and effect on the student at the attainment of proper skills and knowledge necessary to complete all graduation requirements. Any absence may be considered as grounds for dismissal from the class, and may result in consultation between the chief of department, academy representative, and the student, as to the student's continued attendance in the program.

- D. All students shall be required to complete absence reports on the next immediate training day that they return to class. Other documentation may be required to continue in the program. Absence reports will become part of the student's permanent record and copies shall be forwarded to the chief of department. Upon return to the Academy following absence due to injury or serious illness, the recruit must present medical authorization in order to return to the full duties and activities of a firefighter recruit at the Academy.
- E. A student, who through verified illness or injury is absent from more than 5% of the mandated curriculum, may be dismissed, without prejudice, from the program. The student may be eligible for attendance at future Academy recruit sessions, based on a review of the circumstances by the Massachusetts Fire Training Council.
- F. A student, who is absent for more than 5% of the mandated curriculum because of the death of an immediate family member, may be dismissed without prejudice from the program. The student may be eligible for attendance at future Academy recruit sessions. Immediate family shall mean spouse, child, mother, father, brother, sister or grandparent only.
- G. All students who are not present at the start of each training day by the previously designated roll call time shall be recorded as absent for the period of time missed. A student who is tardy must call the academy at 978-567-3218 or 978-567-3219 prior to the start of the training day. Students who are tardy and therefore absent for more than 5% of the mandated curriculum, may be dismissed from the program and not allowed to return to future Recruit Training Programs.
- H. Permanent platoon assignments will be given to students on Training Day One. Said platoon assignments will be maintained throughout the program unless directed by the Recruit Coordinator.
- I. Any student, who is absent from Training Day 1, 3, 5, 6, 16, 26, and 36, or from any live fire training within their assigned platoon shall be subject to immediate dismissal. Attendance at and active participation in all live fire evolutions shall be considered as requirements for graduation from the Recruit Fire Training Program.
- J. Attendance shall mean participation in and performance of all tasks that take place during the training day.
- K. Any student unable, for any reason, to participate in physical fitness or other rigorous activities shall be counted as absent for the training day.
- L. Student shall have an obligation to notify the Academy, in writing, of any change in employment status.

#### CLASS CANCELLATIONS

**Classes at Academy Headquarters** - Scheduled Classes to be held at the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy in Stow are canceled if classes at **Lincoln-Sudbury High School** classes are canceled. If Lincoln-Sudbury High School is cancelled, call 978-567-3248 for information specific to the recruit class. During periods when Lincoln-Sudbury High School is not in session, cancellation notification is the same as for off-site classes (see below). If Lincoln-Sudbury High School has delayed opening due to severe weather, Massachusetts Firefighting Academy classes at headquarters will begin at the scheduled time (no delay).

| STATION | FREQUENCY | LOCATION |
|---------|-----------|----------|
|---------|-----------|----------|

|                  |                       |             |
|------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| WBEC             | AM 1420 / FM 105.5    | Pittsfield  |
| WHYN             | AM 560 / FM 93.1      | Springfield |
| WRKO & WCVB - TV | AM 680 / TV Channel 5 | Boston      |
| WHDH - TV        | TV Channel 7          | Boston      |

If the Academy must cancel a program, for any other reason, every attempt will be made to notify all **pre-registered** students.

#### MISCELLANEOUS

- A. No ball playing or Frisbee playing is allowed in any building.
- B. All students shall read the bulletin board daily before a.m. and p.m. roll call.
- C. Students shall complete all study assignments as directed by the Academy Staff.

**Violation of any of the above rules, regulations, or requirements shall be cause for appropriate punitive action leading to dismissal from the recruit training program.**

#### REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF RECRUIT TRAINING

No student will graduate from the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy Recruit Training Program if, in the opinion of the Training Staff, the Director of Fire Training, and/or the Massachusetts Fire Training Council, the firefighter displays any of the following:

- A. Failure, refusal or inability to climb or work from all types of fire department ladders in the performance of firefighting practices.
- B. Failure, refusal or inability to wear self-contained breathing apparatus in the performance of accepted firefighting practices. This is to include the tendency to display any indication of claustrophobia.
- C. Failure, refusal or inability to operate effectively or as directed during live fire operations at the training tower, flammable gas school or other Academy training sites.
- D. Failure, refusal or inability to operate effectively in the presence of heat, smoke, flame or gases.
- E. Failure to perform all Academy evolutions in accordance with Academy policy as prescribed by the Academy Instructors. No other method shall be accepted.
- F. Failure to attend, perform and operate effectively at all live fire training sessions.
- G. Failure to complete successfully the execution of at least one (1) stipulated exercise encompassing the training maze.
- H. Evidence of deception, cheating or collaboration during a written or practical examination may result in dismissal from the program.

#### GRADING SYSTEM FOR WRITTEN EXAMINATIONS

- A. Grades achieved on written examinations will be employed as follows:

- Students must achieve a minimum average of 70% in the nine intermediate examinations to be eligible to take the final written examination.
- After each intermediate exam, all students who are not maintaining a minimum average of 70% will participate in a counseling session with the Recruit Training Coordinator.
- Students who do not achieve a minimum grade average of 70% after nine intermediate examinations, and students who mathematically cannot raise their average to a minimum 70%, shall be dismissed from the program and shall not be allowed to return to future classes.
- Students must have a minimum grade average of 70% between their final examination grade and their cumulative nine previous examinations to be eligible for graduation.

B. Final grades for written examinations will be determined as follows:

- The average of nine intermediate examinations that will count for 50% of the final grade.
- A final examination that will count for the other 50% of the final grade.

#### GRADING SYSTEM FOR PRACTICAL EVOLUTIONS - (Objective Evaluations)

Practical evolutions will be subject to grading at all times during the program. The individual techniques, evolutions and proper sequence of accomplishment as stated in the drill manual or appropriate reference, i.e., instructor reference, student handout, etc. for the purpose of grading, have been divided into two categories; major and minor errors.

A. Major Errors - Major errors are those errors that are classified as an act or omission that does any of the following:

- Endangers the safety of personnel
- Prevent placing water on the fire.
- Requires the assistance of another member of the crew for evolution to be successful
- Causes total breakdown of the evolution due to lack of completion of a key technique
- Results in undue loss of time

Committing a major error will result in the student being charged with five deficiency points for each error.

B. Minor Errors - Minor errors are those acts or omissions that, while incorrect, will not:

- Impair the safety of personnel
- Impairs placing water on the fire.
- Impairs placing water on the fire.
- Prevents completion of the evolution

Committing a minor error will result in the student being charged with one deficiency point for each error. Minor errors will not be charged against the student if, in the opinion of the Instructor, the student, without assistance from other students, instructors or visitors, discovers and corrects the mistake within the given time period.

#### CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED BY ACCUMULATION OF DEFICIENCY POINTS

- A. At 32 points, the student shall meet with a Recruit Coordinator \*.
- B. At 63 points, the student shall meet with a Recruit Coordinator\* and the Director of Fire Academy or his designee.
- C. At 93 points, the student shall meet with a Recruit Coordinator\*, the Director of Fire Academy or his designee, and his/her department chief\*.
- D. At 124 points, the student shall meet with a Recruit Coordinator\*, the Director of Fire Academy or his designee, and his/her department chief\*, and shall be terminated from the program and returned to his/her respective department.

\*or their designee

### SUBJECTIVE EVALUATIONS\*

Subjective evaluations will be written as necessary by all instructors to document each student's performance. These evaluations may be positive and/or negative in nature and will be written when a student operates outside the scope of his/her training skills during either a graded or non-graded evolution.

Subjective evaluations will be written to document a student's unprofessional or unsafe behavior, inability to operate within fire academy guidelines and training procedures, and non-compliance with the Rules and Regulations for the Basic Firefighter Training Program.

A subjective evaluation as written by an instructor, and verified by the coordinator, that meets any of the following criteria: endangers the safety of personnel, impairs placement of water on the fire, requires the assistance of an instructor for the evolution to be successful, causes the breakdown of the evolution due to lack of completion of a key technique, will be given five deficiency points.

There shall not be more than three of these counted that would amount to not more than 15 total deficiencies as a result. The coordinator or assistant coordinator must verify this particular subjective before points are assessed. If no points are assessed, then it will be treated as a normal subjective with a copy sent to the chief.

If a subjective of this type is written, and points are assessed, then a consultation will be held with the Recruit Coordinator\*, the Program Coordinator\* (or Director), the chief of the respective department, and the candidate.

These subjective evaluations shall be limited to areas that have no grading associated with them, but still represent issues that could cause personal injury or meet the above stated guidelines:

- Phase I through Phase V fires, live fires with extinguishers and car fires.
- Rappelling
- The Draeger maze
- All gas evolutions, including vapor releases
- Aerial ladder practical evolutions
- Timed combined evolutions (after grading)
- Extrication practical scenario
- Water rescue
- Rescue over ladders

If review of these evaluations indicates a need for realignment of a student's behavior or performance (as observed by an individual instructor or the Recruit Program Coordinator), all available methods will be

utilized by the Academy to correct this behavior or performance. For those with adverse reports, the subject evaluations may be a contributing factor in prohibiting or denying graduation from the Academy.

## REPORTS TO CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT

Student grades are sent to the chief of department together with any late arrival and absence reports, injury reports, subjective evaluation reports, warning and dismissal notices, and consultation reports. These reports are sent on the following schedule:

- Initial progress report at the end of two weeks
- Second progress report at the end of four weeks
- Third progress report at the end of six weeks
- Fourth progress report at the end of nine weeks
- Final report is sent following graduation

## WARNING AND DISMISSAL NOTICES

- A. Warning notices shall be issued to students for the following reasons:
  - Academic deficiency
  - Failure to comply with Rules and Regulations
  - Unacceptable level of deficiency points
- B. Warning notices shall become a part of the student's file with a copy sent to the chief of department.
- C. Dismissal notices shall be issued to students who fail to meet the graduation requirements as set forth in the Rules and Regulations or who fail to comply with the Rules and Regulations as established by the Massachusetts Fire Training Council.

## PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS, DISABILITIES, INJURIES AND ILLNESS

- A. All students shall be required to participate in vigorous daily physical fitness activities.
- B. All students are encouraged to inform the MFA Civil Rights Officer of any learning disability that may impede their progress in the program, on the first day of classes. Reasonable accommodations may be requested and approved documentation of learning disability may be required.
- C. All students are required to inform the MFA Civil Rights Officer of any physical infirmities that they may have on their first day of class.
- D. All students are required, upon entry, to report to a Recruit Coordinator if they are using any form of medication.
- E. All students are required to report any injury or illness to a Recruit Coordinator immediately. If a student is required to withdraw from an Academy session due to injuries or illness not brought about by his own misconduct, he may be eligible for entry to another approved Academy session based on a review of the circumstances by the Massachusetts Fire Training Council.
- F. If a student, through his/her own misconduct, becomes so incapacitated by injury that he/she is unable to complete the mandated course, he/she may not be eligible for entry to another approved Academy Recruit Training Program. Such final decision shall be the decision of the Massachusetts Fire Training Council.



**All students shall be required to submit a rules and regulations compliance sheet, signed by both the student and chief of department, at least five days prior to training day one.**